THE SECOND PART OF MR. BOWER'S ANSWER TO A SCURRILOUS PAMPHLET, &c. WITH REMARKS ON THE SIX LETTERS,

Proving them to be FORGED.

LONDON:

Printed for W. SANDBY, at the *Ship*, opposite *St. Dunstan's* Church, *Fleet-Street*.

M.DCC.LVII. 6d

REMARKS

ON THE

SIX LETTERS.

I Promised in the foregoing part of my Answer to demonstrate the Six Letters, ascribed to me by the Jesuits, to be as *impudent*, as *absurd*, as *barefaced* a forgery as *Rome* or the emissaries of *Rome* ever atttempted to impose on mankind, if *false facts*, *false dates*, and *improbabilities bordering on impossibilities* are marks of forgery; and I shall now shew that these marks all evidently concur in the Letters in question.

And to begin with false facts: It must be taken for granted that if I wrote those Letters to Father *Sheldon*, he, as well as the rest of the Jesuits, believed me at that time reconciled to the Church and returned to my duty in the Order: For no man can suppose that he would have corresponded with me as a penitent, if, unabsolved from the greater excommunication which I had incurred by joining in communion with a Protestant Church, I had still professed the Protestant religion, and

 refused

refused as a Jesuit to return to my duty. But that I never was nor pretended to be reconciled either to the Church or the Order, can be easily shewn. For had I been reconciled to the Church, I must have been present at mass on Sundays and holy-days, in compliance with one of her chief precepts; had I been reconciled to the Order, I must, as a Priest and a Jesuit, have said mass not only on Sundays and holy-days but every day, agreeably to the laws of the society. But I challenge the whole body of Papists, Priests, and Jesuits to say they ever saw me any where at mass, or were present when I said it, during the time Father *Sheldon* is supposed to have believed me reconciled to the Church and the Order, and to have thereupon corresponded with me as a penitent.

The Papists fix the æra of my reconciliation to the latter end of the year 1744 or the beginning of 1745, and pretend that I continued a Papist, or at least outwardly to profess the Popish religion from that time to the publication of my preface, that is to the 25th of *March* 1747. But instead of complying, during that time, with any of the precepts of the *Romish* Church, or laws of the Order, I continued to join in communion with the Church of *England*, and to express as great an abhorrence, as I had ever done before, of the idolatry and the other errors of the Church of *Rome*, as the persons, with whom I lived and conversed at that time well know and are ready to attest. My reconciliation therefore must have been only pretended. But on the other hand how could I pretend to be reconciled to the Church and the Order, how could Father *Sheldon* and the rest of the Jesuits believe me for two or three years together reconciled to the Church and returned to my obedience in the Order, when I obeyed, during that time, none of the precepts or laws of the one or the other, nay when I acted

in direct opposition to them all? In short, I am made to speak in those Letters as a sincere penitent returned to the bosom of the Church and my duty in the Order; but how could I have assumed that character in writing to the Provincial, when every Jesuit in town could have informed him that they had never seen me assist at any function of the Popish religion as a Papist, nor perform any as a Priest and a Jesuit; nay when they could not but know that I lived in the same manner as I had done before, kept the same company, spoke with the same abhorrence ridicule and contempt of the Popish doctrines, and still continued to communicate with the Church of *England?* If the Letters therefore be genuine I really was, or pretended to be reconciled to the Church of *Rome* and the Order of the Jesuits for the space of two or three years, and Father *Sheldon* believed me sincere, though during that time I never complied with any of the duties of the one or the other, but acted openly in a manner to have drawn on myself the censures of *Rome* though I had never incurred them before. It does not appear from any one of the Letters that Father *Sheldon* and the rest of the Jesuits entertained the least doubt of my being sincere. There is no notice taken of any suspicions expressed by them, no attempt on my side to excuse or to palliate the irregularity of my conduct, all the difficulty supposed is with regard to their willingness and ability to pay back the money to me so soon as my pressing occasions required. And yet what proofs had I given them of the sincerity of my return to the Church and the Order? Or rather what proofs had they not of my not acting agreeably to such a return? Would they not have allotted me a place to say mass in, at least on Sundays and holy-days, as every Jesuit is bound to do, indispensibly bound? Would they have allowed me to talk the same lan-

guage in every company as must have given such offence and scandal before? Could men, whose intelligence is so good in all places and in all points that concern them, be so ignorant of my doings, so grossly deceived as to correspond with me as a penitent Jesuit when I led the life of a Protestant and of a layman? These absurdities are too gross to be swallowed by any body, who will once reflect on them: They have only passed upon some for want of reflection.

But further what could induce me to return or pretend to return to the Church of *Rome* and my Order in 1744 or 1745? I was at that time in better circumstances than I had ever yet been, had an annuity of 94 *l.* punctually paid me half-yearly, acquired every day more by my writings, and was honoured with the particular protection and friendship of several Protestants of rank and distinction. What could I then expect from the Papists? What advantage could I reap from my return to their Church? I say advantage, for as they will not allow me to have been actuated by motives of conscience and conviction either in quitting their Church and the Order, or in returning to them again, but represent me by their tool the Libeller as one, *who invariable in the prosecution of what he looks upon as his immediate interest becomes all things to all men that he may gain something; a Papist to day, a Protestant tomorrow, again a Papist if it can serve a turn, and even a champion for Protestants without being a Christian* (First Libel, *p.* 35.), they must point out some great object, some considerable gain that I had in my view in becoming or pretending to become once more a Papist and a Jesuit, and not make a man actuated by motives of interest alone take such an extraordinary and hazardous step without any prospect of gain or advantage

vantage accruing to him from it, or any necessity impelling him to it.

This task the Libeller undertakes in page 33 of his First Libel and his words are, *whether* conscience *had any share in influencing his endeavours to regain the confidence of his* Order, *is known only to himself: but, certainly, his* interest *visibly prompted him to take such a step. He was now declining in life, and, after being in* England *a great many years, he had, as yet, gained no connexions that had procured him any* settlement, *and his subsistence depended upon the slavish employment of writing for booksellers, and his uncertain gains as a language-master to ladies. What object, therefore, could be so desirable to a person in his circumstances, and happily disengaged from religious prejudices, as to regain the protection and confidence of a body of men who had it in their power to make him* easy *and* happy, *the rest of his days? Upon being reconciled to his* Order, *he had reason to hope that the public purse of the society might be open to him, as well as to other members of it, and that his income might be augmented by the addition of a salary as a missionary in this country, where it was his inclination to dwell. Mr.* B's *money transaction with Father* Shirburn, *when viewed in this light, seems perfectly consistent with that prudent foresight so remarkable in his character.*

These were the motives, according to the Libeller, all motives of interest, that tempted me to return to the Order, and I was accordingly *re-admitted,* says he, *into the Order of* Jesus *about the end of the year* 1744 *or the beginning of the year* 1745. *But Mr.* Bower, he adds in the following page 34, *having at length had the good fortune to insinuate himself into the good graces of a powerful friend, he began to have a prospect of advancing his interest more by declaring himself a Protestant than by being a Popish emissary.* In the next page he tells his readers, that *my new connexions with Protestants both able and willing*

willing to serve me, and other prudential motives obliged me to break off my renewed connexion with the Order.

Would any man but such a scribbler as the author of this Libel have offered thus to account for my returning to the Order and leaving it again without first informing himself when my connexions with Protestants commenced, especially *with a powerful friend both able and willing to serve me?* If he had had that attention he would have found that in 1744 and 1745 I had the same connexions, the same friends as in 1746 and 1747, and consequently that it was not because I had gained no connexions that I was reconciled to the Order in 1745, nor because I had gained them that I resolved to leave it anew in 1746, or, as the Libeller expresses it, that *I came to a final resolution of making a second breach of my vows*, an expression he has borrowed of his fellow labourer the Popish priest *Butler*.

As for the other motive to which the Libeller ascribes my reconciliation to the Order, *viz.* the hope I entertained of having my income augmented by the addition of a salary as a missionary, he might and should have enquired before he imputed it to that motive, what salary is allowed by the Order of the Jesuits to their missionaries in this kingdom, and whether it was an object capable of tempting a man *invariable in the prosecution of his immediate interest* to bid adieu to all his Protestant friends *both able and willing to serve him*, especially to his *powerful friend*, and turn missionary. In that enquiry he would have found that the sum of 30 *l.* a year, and no more, is allowed by the society to a Jesuit missionary here in town for lodging, raiment, and food; and that those in the country receive nothing from the Order, but are maintained by the families they live with, and allowed 10 *l.* a

year

year for their raiment. I have observed in my *Answer* p. 2 to that all private property being banished from religious communities by the vow of poverty, whatever I possessed would upon my return to the Order be no longer mine but the Order's; so that to say *my interest visibly prompted me to be reconciled to the Order* is as good sense as to say, my interest visibly prompted me to quit my Protestant friends *both willing and able to serve me*, to give up all I might expect from them and turn missionary in order to receive 30 *l.* a year or 10 *l.* in lieu of 94 *l.* and all the rest of the money I had at that time. I will add, that had I been quite destitute of Protestant friends, had I had no prospect of improving my fortune any otherwise than by my industry, nay had the Jesuits left me in possession of what I had, and even added to it the salary of a missionary, it would not have been my interest to return to them for such an addition, as I acquired yearly twice that sum *by writing for the booksellers*, an employment not near so *slavish* as that of a missionary.

The Libeller therefore must point out some other object capable of tempting me to forsake all my Protestant friends, to give up the advantages I might promise myself from their friendship as they were *both willing and able to serve me*, and become anew a Papist and Jesuit. Till he assigns some such object, some such motive of interest, every unprejudiced man must conclude, that I either never was reconciled to the Church and the Order, or, if I was, that I acted like a fool and a mad man, and not like one, who *invariable in the prosecution of what he looks upon as his immediate interest, becomes all things to all men that he may gain something.*

If the Libeller had a desire to account for this unaccountable conduct in me, he had much better

said, that being privately informed in the year 1744 of the design of my brother Jesuit to make himself master of *Paraguay*, the motive of my returning at that time to the Order was to go over to him, and share with him in the benefits of his Royalty there. This to a man of an adventurous spirit might be a temptation; and I hope that the next Letter my ingenious friend designs to bring forth will be from *Nicholas the First of Paraguay* to me, inviting me to come over, and offering to make me his Viceroy or Prime Minister. But till *that* shall appear with sufficient attestations that it was really writ by his *Paraguayan* Majesty, he must excuse all my friends if they are so obdurate as not to believe that I would renounce *out of interest* all the advantages I had in this country, and all I might hope for, and put myself in the power of my enemies in hopes of getting a salary of ten, or at most of 30 *l.* a year.

Were the Libeller accused, as I am by the Papists of being a secret Papist himself, I should be glad to know in what other manner he could possibly clear himself from that imputation but by challenging them, as I have done, to say they ever saw him present at mass or at any other function of the Popish religion, by proving that he not only had constantly joined in communion with Protestants, but expressed an utter aversion to Popery, and by shewing, if he were said in his heart to be one of those, who have no other God nor religion but *mammon*, that it was inconsistent with his interest to be a Papist.

In one of those Letters (*Answer* p. 82.) I offer myself as ready to go to whatsoever part of the world the Provincial or the General of the Jesuits should think fit to send me. *As for myself*, they make me say in that Letter, *I shall name no place* to him, *viz.* the General, *but submit myself entirely*

to

to his will; for I am now, thank God, quite indifferent as to places, and am well persuaded that what place shall be thought by you or by him the most proper, will be the most proper. But at the very time I am supposed to have writ thus I was engaged in a treaty of marriage, as many persons of unexceptionable veracity, who were then privy to it, are ready to attest. If the Letters in question therefore are genuine, I was determined to settle here for life, as I have done since, and at the same time ready to break off all engagements, to bid farewell for ever to my friends and my country, and repair, at a minute's warning, to what part soever of the known world it should please the General to send me, *Rome* itself not excepted, nor even *Macerata*.

In the same Letter I am made to write thus to the Provincial, *in my retreat I have endeavoured to confirm myself still more in my former unalterable resolution*; and in Letter 4th, p. 86, *I am determined, I hope, unalterably to keep my former resolution.* And how will the Libeller reconcile *this unalterable resolution* of living and dying in the Church of *Rome*, and the Order of the Jesuits, *in spite of any thing that can happen*, with an engagement that subsisted at that very time, and absolutely excluded me from that Church and the Order?

As to the woman and the child so often mentioned in those Letters, to whom the money, 1350*l.* is supposed to have belonged, I challenge the Libeller and with him all his Popish friends and allies to produce the one or the other, or any body that ever knew the one or the other. They have been everywhere sought for and have been no-where found but in the Letters in question, and the wicked hearts of their authors. And surely a woman of fortune, of family, injured in her fortune, unjustly turned off with her innocent child, and taken again, must

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have ſome name, ſome friends, ſome relations, ſome acquaintance, ſome reſidence. And it is to be obſerved that this woman is ſuppoſed in the Letters to be my lawful wife; for nothing but marriage could entitle me to her fortune or impower me to diſpoſe of it; and in Letter 3d, p. 84, it is ſaid that *ſome ſecurity would have quieted both her and her relations*; ſo that her relations inſiſted, as well as ſhe, on my giving her ſome ſecurity for her fortune, or *continuing to live with her*, which it cannot be ſuppoſed they would have done if I had lived with her only as a concubine, or (to uſe the Libeller's phraſe) as my whore. Few women of that character are poſſeſſed of ſuch fortunes; and ſuch an alternative would never have been propoſed by any relations, no not the moſt infamous. My *continuing to live with her* inſtead of ſatisfying them, would have offended them more, unleſs ſhe had been my lawful wife; and if ſhe was ſuch, let this ſagacious enquirer find out when, in what church, by what clergyman we were married, what is become of her or the child, who are her relations, why they have left me poſſeſſed of her fortune even ſince I have married another woman, where it was I cohabited with her and when, how it could be concealed from all my friends, and how ſuch an engagement was conſiſtent with the other which I am able to prove?

When leading facts, facts that are the foundation, upon which a whole correſpondence is ſuppoſed to be grounded, are apparently falſe, it is the ſtrongeſt mark of forgery that can be brought to diſprove any ſuch correſpondence. Now that I ever was or pretended to be reconciled to the Church of *Rome* or the Order of the Jeſuits, that I ever offered myſelf as ready to go to whatever part of the world the Provincial or the General ſhould be pleaſed to command me, that I ever cohabited with a wo-

a woman, who brought me 1350*l.* either as a wife or a concubine, are evidently false facts, as I have here shown, and yet asserted or supposed in the Letters in question; therefore the Letters in question are evidently an *impudent and barefaced forgery.*

As to false dates, in Letter 3d the farewell Letter (p. 84, 85.) I am supposed to write thus; *I must repair the crying injustice I have done to an innocent child, and to a woman that has shown the greatest regard for me even in my distress* (by the way I never have been in the least distress these twenty years) *and in order to that accept the advantagious offer now made me by my friends*; and in the postscript, *as for the place, it will be a fortnight before the patent is made out.* Now if this Letter be genuine, a place was offered me before the 25th of *March* 1747, the day on which I published my proposals with the first page of the preface; for it is allowed that the farewell Letter was written before that time. But nothing is more certain than that no place was asked or thought of for me by any of my friends till after I had the honour of presenting to his Majesty the first volume of my History, which was on the 13th of *May* 1748. On the 10th of *September* 1748 Mr. *Say* keeper to the late Queen's library died, and about the 20th of the same month one of my friends, who lived in great intimacy with the late Mr. *Pelham*, applied for that place in my behalf. And this was the only place that was ever promised me, or that my friends ever asked for me. This Letter must therefore be allowed to be a forgery, if false dates are marks of forgery, and they are among the strongest marks. In truth this false date arose from a false report, which prevailed in the world when first it was known that I intended to write the History of the Popes, *viz.* that I was encouraged to undertake it by the promise of a

place; whereas no such promise was really made, or any expectation of it conceived by me till my first volume was published.

It was positively asserted upon the authority of those Letters when they were first publicly shown, that I was relapsed into Popery, that I was reconciled to the Order, and that to enrich the Jesuits I had robbed a woman and her innocent child of their fortune. This was at first positively asserted, and without further enquiry trumpeted about by the lovers of scandal from one end of the town to the other. But the *injured woman* and the *injured child* could be no-where found, though everywhere sought for, nor did it appear that any place had been offered me at the time the Letter mentioning such a Place is supposed to have been writ. Hereupon they shifted their Ground, and instead of concluding Letters to be forged, in which they discovered such visible marks of forgery, they pretended the woman and the child and the place to be mere inventions and fictions not of the Jesuits but mine to impose on the innocent Fathers. For apprehending, said they, and so they say still, that upon the publication of my Preface the Jesuits would no longer pay me the interest of my money, and therefore wanting to recover it before I published my Preface, *I brought a woman and a child upon the stage*, pretending that the money did not belong to me but to them.

But if I had pretended that the money was the woman's and not mine, would not the Jesuits have enquired very strictly whether there really was a woman, and whether the money belonged to her, since by my returning to them it became theirs if there was no such woman, or if the money did not belong to her? No man can think that they would not have made such an enquiry in order to satisfy her and her relations if the money was hers, or to

detect

detect the imposture I was putting upon them in such an impudent manner, if it was not: and thus would the imposture have at once been discovered. Surely no one so intimately acquainted with the Jesuits as I, can be supposed to have tried to deceive them by a fraud so very open to detection as this, and to suppose their sagacity would not have detected it, had I so done, is supposing the most crafty set of men upon earth the most easily overreached.

The whole drift of those Letters is to prevail on Father *Sheldon* to repay me my money, and I am made to express as violent a desire to get it from him *then* as if I were on the point of being carried to jail, or ready to starve for want of it.

Now I can prove that even supposing I lost all this money, which yet I was in no danger of losing, I had still so much left, and such means in my power of acquiring more, as to have been under no necessity of taking any improper or dangerous methods of relieving my wants. But my annuity was secured by my bond, and Mr. *Hill* made no difficulty of repaying the principal when I desired it, deducting what I had received over and above the common interest of 4 *l. per Cent.* And so far was I from being obliged to pay it away as soon as received (which I must have certainly done had my occasions for it been urgent) that two months after I placed it in the New *South Sea* Annuities with 348 *l.* more, as appears by the books; where then was the immediate and pressing necessity, which can be assigned as a cause in any manner adequate to such an effect? There does not appear even the least degree of temptation to induce me to write such Letters as these, and profess myself a Papist in order to get this money repaid.

Of this difficulty the Libeller himself was aware, and let us see how he solves it. In his first Libel,

P. 38. he ascribes the vast solicitude I express to get my money back, and the various inventions I employ for that purpose, to *my being afraid lest upon my ceasing to profess myself a Jesuit my annuity from the Jesuits should cease.* But I had published my Preface to the History of the Popes, which was *ceasing to profess myself a Jesuit*, near three months before the money was repaid me; and the Libeller tells us himself, that upon that publication Father *Sheldon* was in such a hurry to pay me the money that he borrowed it, a plain proof that the worst way I could take to get my money back was to feign myself a Papist. By their own account I was a Protestant when I lent them my money, and when they repaid it. But yet my solicitude to recover the money is the supposed cause of my turning Papist. To have turned *Jew* or *Mahometan* would have been of as much service to me in that respect, and to affirm that I did so would have been the more probable tale of the two.

But the circumstance of the time, when the Letters in question are supposed to have been writ, is, perhaps, as strong a proof of their not being authentic as any thing I have yet alledged against their authenticity. For they are supposed to have been writ in the years 1746 and 1747, that is, at the very time I was writing the History of the Popes and of Popery, nay and one of them but a day or two before the publication of my Proposals with the first page of the Preface, long before which my design of writing that History was publicly known. And can any man think me capable of writing such Letters to the Superior of the Jesuits, and putting it thus in his power, and the power of every Jesuit, to ruin my character with my Protestant friends at the very time I was upon the point of provoking them in that manner, can any man, I say, think me capable of having acted

so

ſo ſenſeleſs a part merely to get back from the Jeſuits a ſum of money I did not want, which I knew they would return to me, and for which in the mean time they paid me an intereſt of 7 *l. per Cent.* Are they, who do not believe me to have acted thus madly againſt all my intereſts, againſt all reaſon, and common ſenſe, fools or knaves? and may it not be ſuppoſed that he, who ſcurrilouſly aſſerts that they are, is a mixture of both?

If the Libeller were charged with a robbery on the highway (and it is no leſs improbable that he ſhould have committed ſuch a robbery than that I ſhould have turned Papiſt and Jeſuit in 1744) and a Letter produced wherein he owned it, as like his writing as if he had writ it himſelf, I ſhould be glad to know by what other means he could prove the Letter to be forged, and make his innocence appear, but by ſhowing that he was in no want of money at the time the robbery is ſuppoſed to have been committed; that if he had been in want he could have ſupplied it by other means without expoſing himſelf to any riſque; that a cauſe aſſigned in the Letter to prove that he had then an immediate and preſſing occaſion for the money was abſolutely falſe, and that he had conſtantly behaved ſo as to leave no room for any man who knew him to entertain the leaſt ſuſpicion of his committing ſuch a crime. If he could beſides point out falſe dates, and falſe facts aſſerted or ſuppoſed in that Letter, there is no Jury that would not, in ſpite of the *external evidence* of the hand-writing acquit him upon ſuch *internal proofs of its falſhood*, and pronounce, without heſitating a ſingle moment, the Letter a moſt impudent and barefaced forgery. That this is my caſe, with reſpect to the Letters in queſtion, I have irrefragably proved, and therefore do not at all doubt that every candid and unprejudiced reader will acquit me of the charge of

having turned Papist and Jesuit in 1744, and pronounce the Letters supposing me to have taken such an extraordinary step, *an evident and palpable forgery*, notwithstanding the external evidence of the hand-writing, the only evidence the Libeller has produced to authenticate those Letters. As for the money transaction, far from proving me to have been reconciled to the Church of *Rome* or the Order of the Jesuits, it proves quite the contrary, as I have shown, I can say, to the entire satisfaction of every unprejudiced reader (my Answer, p. 101, *et seq.*). It is therefore no proof of the genuineness of the Letters, though it has given occasion to the forging of them, and has been made the ground-work of all that is said in them.

As for the similitude of the hand-writing, I will allow the Six Letters to be as like my hand-writing as the Libeller pleases, since I have not yet been suffered to inspect them. But every lawyer will tell him, that instances are not wanting not only of a promissory note or a subscription, but of wills and deeds much longer than these *Six long Letters* together, forged with such art that no man could distinguish the copy from the original. And truly why may not an artist, capable of thus forging a promissory note consisting of two or three lines, forge a Lettter consisting of ten or twenty, and with time and by practice forge many more Letters and longer? Or to what number of lines will the Libeller confine that mischievous art?

But *Mr.* B.'s *hand-writing is extremely remarkable*, says the Libeller, *and hath more particularities than are usually met with. This circumstance shews how difficult it must be to forge Letters bearing so striking a resemblance*, &c. But it happens that *this circumstance* shows quite the contrary, it being far more easy, as they say who are skilled in detecting such forgeries, to imitate a bad hand than a good one,

one, a hand that has many particularities than one that has none: and what they ſay is undoubtedly agreeable to reaſon.

I have never been allowed, as I have obſerved above, to inſpect thoſe Letters myſelf, and many low ſubterfuges and pitiful ſhifts have been uſed to prevent me from having a ſight of them. But one of my friends, who compared them with ſome manuſcript ſheets of my Hiſtory, printed long before thoſe Letters were ſhewn, obſerved that tho' I form the letter *d ſometimes with a long open ſweep, and ſometimes ſhort and with a curled top*, yet the one was in far greater proportion in the one manuſcript than it was in the other; a nicety that ſeems to have eſcaped the attention of the ſkilful operator. This is what my friend obſerved, and a very juſt obſervation it is, and not what the Libeller makes him obſerve in page 43 of his firſt Libel.

The farewell Letter, p. 84, muſt have been writ but a day or two before the publication of the Propoſals and the firſt page of the Preface to the *Hiſtory of the Popes*, as I have proved in my Anſwer, p. 90. And yet in that Letter I am made *heartily to wiſh that it were in the power of the Provincial to make me eaſy in a* FORTNIGHT, *and prevent the impending ruin.* And can any man really believe that I wrote thus to the Provincial, and took a ſtep the very next or the following day that put an end to my correſpondence with him and the Jeſuits in general? That I allowed him a fortnight to *prevent the impending ruin*, and the very next day, or the day after, put it out of his power to prevent it? They, who believe it, muſt either be themſelves, or ſuppoſe me to have been at that time, wholly deſtitute of all common ſenſe.

At the very time when thoſe Letters are ſuppoſed to have been written, Mr. *Millar*, Bookſeller, manager of the *Modern Univerſal Hiſtory*, would

willingly have engaged me for the whole of that work. Had I accepted this offer those Letters would never have been heard of: But though the share I had in writing the *Antient Universal History* had proved so very advantageous to me, I declined being anywise concerned in the *Modern* in order to write the History of the Popes, and publish it at my own expence, without promise of place, pension, or any other reward whatsoever. And can any man possibly think that, if I had writ those Letters, I would have refused so advantageous an offer to undertake, at my own charge, so expensive a work, when I could not but know that every Jesuit had it in his power to discredit both me and my work? A sensible man may be a rogue, as the Libeller observes in p. 55 of his first Libel. But a sensible man cannot well be supposed to act like a natural fool or a madman, when his credit, his interest, his all is at stake.

I shall add, that had I writ those Letters, I should have taken care to prevent their having ever been shown to any living soul. I needed only to have prefixed to each Letter the word *soli*, *to you alone*, which is the same thing with the Jesuits as *sub sigillo confessionis*, under the seal of confession, an inviolable seal. Thus the Jesuits write to their Superiors, the General, or the Provincials, when they want the contents of their letters to be kept secret: and the Superior is bound to destroy the letter as soon as he has answered it, in the same manner as a Confessor is bound to destroy or return to the penitent a written confession of his sins. No Secretary, except the General's private Secretary, dares read a letter to which the word *soli* is prefixed, no more than the person, to whom it was written, dares show it. I said, *except the General's private Secretary*; for the General, to whom many such letters may come, as the Jesuits from all parts of the world

apply to him, is allowed a private Secretary, who may read those letters, and answer them as directed by him, but must keep the contents secret and destroy the letters when answered. Of this I could not be ignorant; and can any man think that I would not have taken so easy a method of securing myself from any publication of this correspondence, had I been so absurd as to have entered into it without any one rational motive? But I repeat it again, *some exceeding strong motive, some cogent necessity* must be alledged to make it credible, that a man in his senses should act in the manner I am said to have acted.

The authors of the *Critical Review*, whom I find in the number of my enemies, and am sorry to find it, because some amongst them are men of good parts, in order, as they say, to show the absurdity of my defence, make use of this simile. Let us imagine a highwayman thus addressing a judge upon the bench: "My Lord, I am amazed "your Lordship should give any credit to what "this evidence has so positively sworn against me. "Is it possible, my Lord, that I should be so very "silly a fellow as to rob on the highway, when "your Lordship knows I could not do it without "running the risque of being hanged?" *Critic. Review, vol. i. p. 563.*

This would be indeed a most absurd plea: but is this a fair stating of my defence? No, my defence is, that I was not so very silly a fellow as to risque being undone *without having the least temptation to do so*; that I was in no want of money; that I was not incited by any distress to endeavour to get the money in question by dangerous methods; that the evidence brought against me to prove that I was is apparently false in that and other particulars, and upon the whole most incredible. This, I apprehend, would be a good plea at any bar but

that of those writers, who by their whole manner of stating the argument on one side or the other, have shown themselves very partial and violent against me, as any man of good sense will allow who reads their performance.

I shall add here the *New Popish Creed*, that the Libeller imposes on his readers, and would have them all implicitly to consent and assent to:

We believe that Mr. *Bower*, to get back a sum of money he was in no want of, and for which he received an annuity of no less than 7 *l. per Cent.* pretended to turn Papist in the year 1745, and in the year 1746 began a correspondence with the Jesuits as a penitent returned to their Church, which he continued till the 25th of *March* in the year 1747, two days before he published his Proposals for the History of the Popes, and a year after he had declared his having resolved to engage in that work.

We also believe, that when he carried on the aforesaid correspondence he was married to a woman, who had a child, and whose relations were acquainted with her being his wife; and yet that wife, that child, those relations can no-where be found.

We believe too, that the money he had lent to Father *Hill* belonged to that woman, though he can prove it was all his own, and that he disposed of it as such after it had been returned to him by Father *Hill*.

But in case any shall think these two last propositions absurd and incredible, we permit them to believe that they were a wicked invention of *Bower* to impose on the Jesuits, and that the good fathers believed it without any enquiry; though if the money he had lent them did not belong to that woman, it must have been theirs, and not his, as soon as he returned to the Order again; and though nothing

nothing could be more easy than to make that enquiry.

And to show our further regard and indulgence to scrupulous consciences, we permit any, who chuse it, to believe that this fiction was not quite a fiction, but that the woman mentioned in the Letters as married to *Bower* and having a child, was a woman to whom he never was married, and who had no child; and that the cause of his being in such a terrible hurry to get his money back was a demand, which this woman can be proved to have made upon him three years after that money was paid (*See Mr.* Bower's *Answer to a New Charge*).

And we believe, that having put it in the power of the Jesuits to ruin his credit and fortune in *England*, he proceeded to irritate them as much as he could by a public attack on the whole system of the Popish religion.

We further believe, that from the year 1744 or 1745 he was a Papist and a Jesuit, without having in all that time performed any of the duties, which as such he was indispensably obliged to perform; and that the Jesuits knew this, and yet corresponded with him as one returned to their Church and their Order.

And we believe and declare, that whoever does not believe the said Propositions is a wicked accomplice of the said *Bower* or a natural fool.

Having now shewn what my enemies, and particularly the Libeller, require all those of their faith to believe, I shall give a sincere account to the reader what I myself believe concerning those Letters.

I believe that ninety-nine in a hundred of the Roman Catholics in this kingdom, and particularly the Gentleman, in whose possession they are and have been for some time, are as incapable of having forged them, or of countenancing such a forgery,

if

if they knew it to be so, as any of my friends would be to forge Letters against them: but I believe there are Jesuits and other missionaries here very capable of employing those, or still blacker means of defaming any person, who has left them, and who they think may do hurt to the Popish religion.

I do not believe it was any apprehension of my parts or capacity, that made them think me a dangerous enemy, but the circumstance of my having been a Jesuit and a member of the Holy Inquisition. As such they feared I might attack them with more perfect knowlege and greater authority than most other men, and that my testimony against them would make more impression than that of persons bred up in the Reformed Religion, and whose prejudices had always been on that side. To prevent the effect this might have on the minds of the Catholics here, I believe that as soon as they knew I designed to write the History of the Popes these Letters were forged. By what hand, or how conveyed from one to another, it is impossible for me to conjecture. I will not, without proof, charge any one man, much less any family with such an imposture: I will not even accuse Father *Sheldon* of having been knowingly concerned in the fraud, how freely soever his name has been used in this ugly affair: Nor do I believe that at first, or for a long time, there was any intention that the Letters should become the talk of the Public, or be seen by any Protestants, who might be willing or able to call the authenticity and credit of them in question.

I believe that they were designed for the use of the Catholics to discredit with them the History of the Popes, and hinder any converts from being made by it; or, at most, that by a dark whisper of there being

being ſuch proofs of my inſincerity my character might be hurt among perſons to whom I was not well known. But upon the unexpected and aſtoniſhing countenance given to them laſt year by two or three Proteſtants, without any further enquiry or examination than whether the writing reſembled mine, the Papiſts were emboldened to go a great deal further than they had intended, and further than (if I am not miſinformed) ſome of the wiſeſt of them think they ought to have done. The Letters were publicly ſhown to many perſons of unqueſtionable zeal for the Proteſtant cauſe, and even to my moſt intimate friends, who, as ſoon as they got any poſitive information that they were to be ſeen, deſired to ſee them, and ſaw evident marks of forgery in them. But, though they were not convinced of my having writ them, the Libeller was, and undertook to convince the whole world, while the Papiſts ſtood by and rejoiced in the efforts of their Proteſtant champion.

How far he has ſucceeded the Public will judge when they have read my Defence as well as my Charge. If ſome have been ſtartled by the confidence of that Charge, and had not patience to wait till I made my Defence, I am not ſurprized. Mankind are too apt to be quick in deciding, and to yield a haſty aſſent to a peremptory, petulant, bold accuſation, eſpecially when the party accuſed is compelled to defer his Reply for ſome length of time, as I was by many circumſtances in the nature of the Charge, which the Libeller brought not againſt me alone, but other innocent perſons, whoſe reputation I thought myſelf bound to defend.

Far be it therefore from me to affirm that none can have entertained a prejudice againſt me in regard to thoſe Letters, without being *knaves* or *natural fools*. I will not even aſſert that the retaining that prejudice will prove them to be ſo; I am not

ſuch

ſuch a coxcomb; but I hope and I truſt that the far greater part will be candid enough to re-conſider the cauſe before they paſs ſentence, and that the ſentence will be uninfluenced by party or paſſion.

It is not my intention to trouble the world any more on this ſubject. I am not important enough to deſerve that they ſhould give me any more of their time and attention. If the Letters to *Sheldon* are proved to be mine, I merit no credit as to any thing elſe I can ſay for myſelf: if they are forgeries, thoſe who forged them can, I think, merit none as to any thing elſe they bring to defame me. The Libeller may get money by ſpreading their calumnies in eighteen-penny pamphlets, and while he does ſo may find his account in a perpetual controverſy upon this ſubject, or other ſupplemental and new-invented lies; but I ſhall leave him to carry it on by himſelf and return to the Hiſtory of the Popes with all diligence, that I may endeavour to make the Public amends for the time I have ſpent in defending myſelf againſt the new Inquiſition ſet up in this kingdom. But if my diſpatch in purſuing that work ſhould not be ſo great as I deſire, I hope it will be conſidered that my health has been hurt by the anxiety and vexation, which I could not but feel from an attack of this nature. For notwithſtanding the ſupport that my innocence gives me, and the kindneſs of my friends, who have had too much virtue to give me up to the rage of unjuſt defamation, I know that to be called to a public defence of every article of my paſt life, to be obliged to anſwer every lie that private malice or enmity can produce to aſperſe either me or my friends, both living and dead; to be obliged to ſpeak to the Public on the moſt private domeſtic affairs, or to ſuffer by my ſilence; to have a powerful ſect, powerful even in this country, notwith-

withſtanding the jealouſy of the legiſlature and government, engaged to attack me, not with fair arguments as I attack them, but with the foul and envenomed weapons of ſlander; and to ſee them ſupported in ſuch an attack by a party of Proteſtants more furious and bitter againſt me than they; all this I know is a grievous misfortune, and enough to diſorder the beſt conſtitution of body or mind. I pray God that the miſchief may ſtop with me: but no innocent man, no innocent woman, no family can be ſafe if ſuch proceeding as this be encouraged. The Inquiſition ſet up againſt me will ſoon enlarge and extend its juriſdiction. Invitations will be ſent to the enemies of other perſons, as well as to mine, to tranſmit their intelligence of ſlander againſt them; and that intelligence will be publiſhed in papers and pamphlets by anonymous ſcribblers, to the great entertainment of the malicious, ill-natured, and envious part of mankind, but to the ruin of all ſociety and all private peace. This is an evil in which the Public is much more concerned than in my converſations with Mrs. *Hoyles* or Mrs. *Sutton*; and if the Libeller, who has begun it, receives their applauſe, they will have no right to complain that his example is followed by ſeveral others, and that their ſiſters, their daughters, their wives are defamed by hear-ſay reports of twenty years ſtanding; nay after they have been laid many years in their graves. For even the grave is not an aſylum againſt the fury of this Inquiſition. Like their Brothers in *Italy*, *Spain*, and other countries, where that moſt holy Tribunal prevails, they paſs ſentence on the dead as well as the living, and pronouce damnation againſt them, if they have ſhewn any friendſhip, or given any protection to one, whom their equitable court has condemned: Anſwers and confutations will ſignify nothing. As faſt as one lie is

destroyed another will be spawned, and the language will be; "'Tis in vain to defend yourself "from this charge; we have others behind; you "don't know how far our intelligence reaches; "we *reserve our fire* (Second Libel, p. 83.)."

But is this the language of a lover of truth, of one only concerned for justice and truth? It is the language of a highwayman endeavouring to intimidate the man he assaults, "Sir, don't defend "yourself, *I reserve my fire*, I have more pistols "than this in my hand; I have one in my pocket; "I have one in my bosom; I have other friends "on the road whom you don't see at present; we "are a strong gang; it will be to no purpose for "you to resist."

Upon my word I believe the man says very true: they are a strong gang; but I flatter myself that justice and truth will be stronger than they. Yet if these methods of attacking the fame of innocent persons should meet with encouragement instead of detestation; if the spirit of party should join to promote them; if it should prove both a safe and a profitable trade; justice and truth will quickly be banished out of this kingdom, and calumny will be advanced to reign in their stead.

As for me, the course of nature must soon put an end to all my vexations: but the youngest man now alive will not see an end of the mischief that society will suffer from the consequences of this persecution begun against me, if the manner of carrying it on be not branded with the infamy it deserves.

I shall conclude with this wish; may there be found in all Protestants, especially in all the Protestant clergy, as much zeal to defend the Protestant cause and to expose the whole system of Popish superstition, injustice, and cruelty, as there has been in me, who am accused of being in secret a Papist and a Jesuit.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

As my readers will expect that I should clear myself from the charge of perverting Mrs. *Hayles* to Popery before I take my leave of the Public, I shall here give an account of that affair, so far as I can remember it at the distance of twenty-nine or thirty years.

I had no kind of acquaintance with that silly woman till Mrs. *Sutton*, with whom I was well acquainted, told me that she had a confidant in her neighbourhood, the wife of one Mr. *Hayles*, a printer's journeyman, with whose room she could make free, and desired I would allow her to introduce me to her, as one in whom she could entirely confide. To this I consented: and thus did my acquaintance commence with Mrs. *Hayles*. I thenceforth continued to meet Mrs. *Sutton* in her room, she being sometimes present, and taking sometimes a pretence to go abroad and leave us alone, as it had been before-hand agreed between Mrs. *Sutton* and her she should do. Mrs. *Sutton* was afterwards married; and I defy Mrs. *Hayles* to say that I ever met her, or desired to meet her alone, either in her room or any-where else, after her marriage. From moral honesty I am sure I have never departed; and I would to God that throughout my whole life I had also lived according to the strict purity and sanctity enjoined by the Gospel. But is every man's character who has not done this to be blasted? What then will become of many of those who are my accusers? Indeed if a man sets up for a *saint*, to prove that he was a *sinner* while he wore the mask of that sanctity is sufficient to prove that he was an impostor, and consequently is enough to discredit his character. But when did I assume such a mask? I

appeal to all my acquaintance whether I ever pretended to any other praise than that of an honest man; and I defy all the malice of *Rome* and of Hell to shew that by any action of all my past life (whatever my follies and frailties have been) I ever deserved to forfeit that praise. I had been certainly wiser if I had taken more care to conceal all my frailties; but men of understanding will think that my having wanted that wisdom is not a symptom of an hypocrite or an impostor.

As for the *conversion* of Mrs. *Hoyles*, about which such a noise is now made, from what I have said, and from her own account, it is manifest that my acquaintance with her was not owing to any design or desire in me of making a proselyte. But in some accidental discourses in her company, I may have possibly spoke (as I still think myself bound in candour to speak) of the *spiritual exercises* used by the Jesuits, and some other institutions and practices of the Order, or of the Church of *Rome*, as pious in themselves and conducive to holiness, though by them misapplied. I may have also defended that Church when unjustly accused of holding opinions she does not hold, as she frequently is from zeal without knowledge. And from hence Mrs. *Hoyles*, a very weak woman, may have conceived silly scruples, which scruples Mrs. *Sutton*, who was a zealous Papist, improved in my absence (for I went soon after into the country), and brought a priest to her, by whom she was gained over to the Popish religion, and received into that Church. She did not therefore owe her conversion to me, but to her friend Mrs. *Sutton*, and to the priest she brought to her. Indeed herself only says, that *I gave her scruples*, and that *three years after* I had given her those scruples she *became a Catholic* (First Libel, p. 75, 76.). A plain proof that it was not from the scruples I had given her, but

from

from the impressions made upon her by others, that she was induced to change her religion.

As for her narrative, it contains as many falsehoods as lines, was evidently made for her by the authors of the Six Letters to confirm by her testimony all that is said or supposed in them, and she repeats it, as I have been informed by some, who have had the curiosity to hear it from her own mouth, as a school-boy does his lesson by heart, in just the same words as it stands in the narrative.

But *she will*, says the Libeller in page 80, *at any time convert her narrative into an Affidavit*. And will she make oath that I, who was a professed Jesuit and lived twenty years in the Order, did not know, but applied to her to know, whether I *might trust my money in the hands of the Jesuits for an annuity*; that I employed her to *speak to the Gentlemen of the Order*, as if I could not speak to them myself, or my speaking would not be of as much weight with them as hers; that I passed by Mrs. *Sutton*'s account for a merchant and a knight of *Malta*, two very different professions and characters; that she declared if *Mrs.* Sutton *and I could not marry, we should not meet any more at her apartment*, though we continued to meet there with her full and free leave till Mrs. *Sutton* was married, and though, whenever she was obliged to go out on the days of our meeting, she used to send the key of her room to Mrs. *Sutton* lest we should be disappointed? If Mrs. *Hoyles* should confirm all these things upon oath, her oath would be of no weight with unprejudiced persons, no more than her word, that is of no weight at all.

It is true that I desired her husband to print a thousand Receipts for me; and it was in order to have an opportunity of paying him for some prints he had given me. I paid him accordingly for

those

those Receipts double their value; but I never used one of them, and I have them still by me.

As for Mr. *Faden*'s evidence (p. 82.) which the Libeller boasts of as a Protestant evidence, it is a hearsay evidence, and that of Mrs. *Hoyles* over again.

I knew nothing of the change Mr. *Hoyles* had made of his religion till long after it happened; and, if I was not misinformed at the time, it was owing to the importunity of his wife and motives of interest more than to conviction and conscience. For the Jesuits, it seems, had given him some hopes of their employing him as their Printer; and as such they employed him accordingly after his conversion. A silly woman having therefore conceived scruples, as he pretends at this time, from some accidental conversations of mine thirty years ago, is the sole instance that the Libeller can alledge, with the least shadow of truth, of my zeal for Popery; and let him make the most of it that malice can make. I am sure that much more than I ever said to her I have said in conversation, within this last twelvemonth, to the most zealous of my Protestant friends, without offending them or the Protestant cause, though in vindication of Popery unjustly accused, or in praise of some things in the Popish, or even Jesuitical institutions. Truth can never be hurt by truth, nor served by slander; but fools will turn instruction to folly, and wrest what they hear to favour the dispositions of their own minds. How have the doctrines about Grace and Election, taught by the best divines of our Church, been perverted and abused to fanaticism and enthusiasm by ignorant people!

Before I conclude I beg leave to take notice of two falshoods fathered upon me by the Libeller, in page 42 of his Libel, where he writes thus; *It can also be proved upon our Historian, that he invented*

another falshood, *about the delay of his second volume; for he told many gentlemen that he waited till the paper came from* Holland *on which it was to be printed; whereas, it is notorious that no such paper ever was sent for, that volume of the History of the Popes being printed on* English *paper bought of Alderman* Janssen, *as will appear from accounts still in being.*

This the Libeller, perhaps, may have heard at his intelligence office of scandal, where he heard that I attended Dr. *Aspinwall* in his last illness, and that he died a faithful son of the Church of *Rome.* But I never said that I waited for paper from *Holland.* On the contrary, I piqued myself upon using no other paper but *English*: and I am very confident that the Libeller can no more name any Gentleman out of *the many whom I told that I waited till the paper came from* Holland, than he can name any one person, whom Mrs. *Aspinwall* told, that *she would not permit a priest to administer extreme unction to the doctor, who desired it,* though *she made no secret,* as is positively asserted by this writer, *of her husband's dying sentiments,* and must consequently have spoken of them to hundreds. I shall add, that it was not the publication of my second but of my third volume that was delayed for want of paper, of *English paper.* For Alderman *Janssen,* who from the beginning had supplied me with paper, having no more of the same sort with that on which the two first volumes and part of the third were printed, I waited a considerable time for the same paper, being unwilling to leave him. But he let me know at last by a letter, which I have still by me, that *the paper-maker had sent him word that the waters were so low that he could not even answer for the paper all that summer, if there did not come plenty of rain.* Hereupon I went to Mr. *Bloss,* who engaged to supply me with the paper I wanted in a fortnight or three weeks at

most, and he was as good as his word. If this diligent enquirer, who I find makes it part of his business to examine the accounts and the books of those I have dealt with, will apply to Mr. *Bloss*, it will *appear from accounts still in being* that I bought of him the paper that Alderman *Janssen* could not supply me with, and paid him punctually for it, as I have punctually paid every other person with whom I have ever had any dealings.

In the same page I am charged with the following *blunder*, *viz.* with *pretending in a certain family that I had never been a priest*, and at the same time entertaining the company with stories which I had heard in confession; and this in the presence of the lady of the house, *who was*, as I could not but know, *very well acquainted with the* Romish *religion*. A blunder indeed! But to whom of my acquaintance did I ever make a secret of my having been a priest? That I was a priest all know who know me. The lady therefore must either have misunderstood me, with respect to that point, or I her. For who but an absolute idiot could pretend to a Roman Catholic, or indeed to any one acquainted in the least with the *Romish* religion, that he had heard confessions and yet had never been a priest! And why should I have concealed from that lady what I concealed from nobody else, what all the world knew? I therefore repeat it, she must have misunderstood me, or I her.

I think I have now answered all that can be supposed to deserve any answer in the Libeller's Pamphlets; and I ought rather to make an apology for having, in the three I have written on this subject, taken notice of so many impertinent falshoods than for having overlooked others, if any are overlooked. The task of following such an author through all the dirty kennels, into which he has raked for intelligence and for scandal, is too

irksome

irksome to me; and to carry my reader with me would offend him too much, and take up a great deal too much of his time. But it would be still more inexcusable in me, if I were to desire the attention of the Public, at this busy season, to hear me answer the Libeller's *scurrilous railings*. I cannot bring myself to contend with him in scolding: much less will I abuse his patrons and friends, whoever they are, as he has done mine. Some persons may think too well of him and too ill of me, without being either dishonest or foolish. I hope that their candour and good understanding will, sooner or later, upon better information and cooler reflection, dispel any prejudice entertained against me; but, if it does not, I am sure my railing at them in so indecent a manner, as the Libeller does at all my friends, would neither do any mischief to them, nor service to me.

N. B. I am obliged to my unknown friend for his complaint in the *Daily Gazetteer* of *February* 5. against the partial omissions and gross misrepresentations of my defence in the *Monthly Review*; and he might complain, with as much justice and truth, of the authors of the *Critical Review* just published. I therefore beg the Public to be upon their Guard against the authors of those monthly Pamphlets, most of them being combined with my Enemies against me.

F I N I S.